

the parish priest, constituted a marriage without any voluntary participation of the priest. The Huguenots in France, for more than a century, married themselves in this way, a notary being employed to make a record and certificate. Secondly, this law became the great engine of the church to hold its children to their allegiance and prevent mixed marriages. To win the consent of the parish priest to perform the ceremony the parties must conform to church requirements, — confession and communion. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were occupied by struggles of living men to regulate their interests in independence of these restraints.

437. Puritan marriage. The Puritan sects made marriage more secular, as the Romish Church made it more ecclesiastical. Although they liked to give a religious tone to all the acts of life, the Puritans took away from marriage all religious character. It was performed by a civil magistrate. Such was the rule in New England until the end of the seventeenth century. However, there was, in this matter, an inconsistency between the ruling ideas and the partisan position, and the latter gave way. There has been a steady movement of the mores throughout the Protestant world in the direction of giving to marriage a religious character and sanction. It has become the rule that marriages shall be performed by ministers of religion, and the custom of celebrating them in religious buildings is extending. The authority and example of the church of Rome have had nothing to do with this tendency. They are not even known. It has been purely a matter of taste, sentiment, and popular judgment as to what is right and proper; also it has been due to the ideas of

women in regard to suitable pomp and glory. The
mores have
once more taken full control of the matter, and
the religious
ceremony is used to satisfy the interests, and
fulfill the faiths
of the population. Such is the effect of civil
marriage as estab-
lished in the nineteenth century. At the present
time the minis-
ters of religion seem disposed to use their lawful
position as the
proper ones to celebrate marriage, that they may
impose restric-
tions on divorce, and on marriage after divorce.